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C O N T E N T S

FOR THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF DIVINITY

The Effect of Communism upon the Christian Church

James Daniel Salmon

The Adaptation of the New Occidental Religious Education to China's Needs

Chi Tsau Wang

Twentieth Century Evangelism

Raymond Edward Wilder

An Introduction to the Study of the Contribution of Wycliffe and Tyndale to Modern Versions of the English New Testament

Roy Edward Wilson

THE EFFECT OF COMMUNISM UPON THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

by

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B.S. Michigan State College 1927

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1931

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THE EFFECT OF COMMUNISM UPON THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

The effects of Communism upon the Christian Church are already being felt. In some countries in the world it is having a greater effect than in others. In Russia, organized religion has come to grips with it; in China the communist are just beginning to assert their power; in Japan it has already become a question which will win, the Law of Love of Kagawa, or the gospel of communism of Lenin and Karl Marx. If we turn our eyes to Europe we will see the same condition arising there. Germany is torn between two masters; the one being the old form of democracy and the new form of Communism and Facism. England, more recently has weathered as storm which near turned that country from its traditional democratic government to the more recent kind of a dictatorship.

Communism is already being tried upon a large scale in Russia. If it succeeds in that country, and everything looks as if it would at the present time, then we will have to watch out for the other governments of the world. Today many of the Church leaders say, "Communism is the work of the devil."[1] Others have said, "It is a movement sent from God and nothing but good can come out of it."[2] But whatever one may think at the present time, this one fact remains true, never in

1 Failure of Marxism and Lenism- Lawton, Outlook 61' 256-8 Mr 3'28

2 Spinka The Soviets and Religion Chicago Register Jan 1931

the history of the Christian Church has it gone through such an ordeal, and if it is able to withstand this tempest it will be able to stand anything which will come in the future.

There is much confusion of thought about Communism at the present time. The term has become linked up with the overthrow of governments; the killing of men and women; the closing of churches, and the persecution of a certain type of man. With every new form of government which has come upon the earth, the world has had the same misgivings. When the French peasant revolted , all Europe looked on in wonderment and thought of the time when the same thing would happen to their country. I suppose they viewed the American Revolution in the same way. But what American would say today, the colonist were Reds or anarchist? There comes a time in the history of every country when it must conform to the opinions of the majority of the people or else look for revolt. The people of a country are like the man who lay at the pool at Bethesda. They will remain down for a certain length of time, and then they will hear the voice of some one calling them to "Arise and take up they bed and walk." And when they do, it might be to the detriment of those who had been keeping them down through the ages. They will will in spit of all the armies, navies and war machines. After that they will set up a government which will remedy the defects

of the past government. Revolutions are not bad for a country. Our own Thomas Jefferson was an ardent supporter of them. But when a country becomes stagnant, and corrupt at the center and fails to grow with the times, then it is on the road to distruction. We in the world today can learn great lessons from Russia if we would only have eyes to see the great movement which is going on. Communism is a movement which will contribute much to the betterment of mankind.

There is only one country which has tried Communism on a large scale and that is Russia. I want to take that country as an example and show that when a country breaksdown the middle class ofpeople, then they will revolt. And if the church, at this time, does not have a sound gospel it will meet with disaster. But in the second place, I want to show religion cannot be killed by legislation or persecution and that it will tend to change and mold itself to the upbuilding of the life of the people. I will divide this paper into five parts. In the first part I will try to point out some of the ideals of the Communist, (2) I will give a short history of the Russian Orthodox Church, (3) The Rise of Communism (4) Effects upon the Religious World, (5) Probable trends of Religion in the Future.

IDEALS OF COMMUNISM

Communism is the extreme left wing of the socialist party. They are socialist in this respect that they believe in the control of all industry of the country by the government, and that the profits of the industry should be used for the benefit of the population instead of the profits going into the pockets of a few men for their own pleasure. They would sell all things produced for just a little above cost in order that all might be able to buy the luxuries of life. In a word it is this, all will work for the benefit of the Commune in which he lives, and thus a social order will be built up which will make mankind more happy because he has more of the material blessings of life. To get control of these industries is the question where the socialist and the communist part company. The former would pay the owners of the industry for their organization, and then have the government run the business. But you will still have the capitalist for he would have this large supple of money to live on in luxury. The Communist on the other hand say,"The money in the first place does not belong to the industrialist. It was earned by the sweat of the laboring man and the capitalist is not intitled to it; or if it was inherited by him, then his parents got it in the same way from the communist ancestors." Therfore they argue, "He always earned it dishonestly or else he would not be rich." To attain

their ends they would be willing to take up the sword and gun. Those who would appose their program, they would kill or drive into exile. When the government is under the control of the working class of people, then they w would be able to enjoy the products of their labor.

As the name suggests, all things will be operated by the government. The hospitals, the stores, the industry, the farming of the country, the amusements, the schools, and even the number of days and hours a person must work. All will work for the benefit of the country and in turn, the country will work for their benefit. It is an idealistic scheme of life. Many times it has been tried out on a much smaller scale and each time it has failed. Now we see it being carried out upon a large scale. They not only hope to make it work in their own country, but they expect the workers of the world to unite in this program and bring about the downfall of the capitalist class. The evils of the capitalistic class we know, but will the communist do any better when they have the power? One must not weigh the merits and the demerits too much, for there is an e evil existing and to remedy this evil ought to be the aim of every one.

Objections to Religion

The ideals are good; but what are their objections to religion? They base their attitude toward religion upon two fundamental principles. In the first place

their teacher, Karl Marx, was anti- religious, and in the second place religion as they know it is anti-scientific.

Those who have read any of Karl Marx know that he is a materialist. He has found no place in his w writings for the spiritual man. The Bolsheviks, who copy him to the letter, have also found no place for a God in their social order. Neitzchke has put this teaching into the mouth of one of his principle characters in his novel, Fathers and Sons. He has one ask this character "What is he doing?" The reply is this, "I am studying frogs, frogs, frogs." In other words it meant this, " "I know nothing except that which I can see." Frogs are used in the laboratory for dissecting purposes. The microscope has been mad a substitute for God. It might work for a short time but after the rush of enthusiasm is over, will their souls still be satisfied? This is a vital question for the religious life of that country.

In the second place, the say, "Religions is the opiate of the people." This was the inscription over the tomb of their most beloved saint, Comrad Lenin. Religion to them means an instrument in the hands of the capitalist or the Bourgoesie class to deaden the nerves of the people. It was a method by which the Russian government kept the peasant in subjection before the revolution, and they say it is the same method used by the capitalistic governments thruout the world. In

Russia they had a just cause against the church we will see as we go along; in other parts of the world it might not be so true.

With this understanding of the Communist party as it exists today in Russia let us go back two hundred years to the beginning of the trouble which broke upon the Russian church with such force in 1917. It is singular enough to know that communism would only work in certain types of countries. Why should it succeed in Russia and why should it not succeed in the United States? Why should the people of Russia tolerate such an evil, if all the oppressions which we read about are true? A conservative writer says, Today in the whole country of Russia there are only about one million Communist."[1] The population of the country is over one hundred and forty million. There must be a reason why the people do not overthrow this government and put in its place the old Tsar regime.

HISTORY OF THE COUNTRY AND CHURCH.

"It is a common story which is often heard, that when an Englishman and an American get together their usual topic of conversation is sport; when Frenchmen meet their topic is women; when two Russians meet, they discuss religion and God."[2] It is only natural that they should discuss topics of a religious nature. At the present time with all the industrialization which is going on over nine tenths of the people live in rural

1 Thompson- The Russian Revolution pg 55
2 Hecker -- The Soviets and Religion pg 1

communities. Country people are always more religious than city folk because they are depending upon nature continually for their livelihood. One year they will have too much rain, then the next year a draught; and the third year the snow might come too early and again their crops will be spoiled. They have no other place to go but to that supernatural power which we call God. On Sunday afternoons you will find the Russian men in the saloons, or in the public places discussing religious topics, while the rest of the world is too busy to think of anything but enjoyment. There is a story prevalent about the avowed agnostic writer, Neitzchke, that one day he was invited by Doestovsky to his home f for tea. While the tea was being made their conversation turned to the topic of "Whether there was a God or not?" The discussion went on for sometime, when the friend reminded Neitzchke that the tea was ready, and he replied, "Well we haven't decided whether there is a God or not."[1] From the lowly peasant to the most educated man the topic of conversation is religion. It plays the major part in the life of this type of people.

There is probably no country where the people take life so seriously as in Russia. Life for them is hard and they naturally turn to religion as a solace. The church in Petrograd would be well patronized, yet the spiritual condition of the pwople would be deplorable. The very heart of the Russian peasant's religion is the

1 Olgin The Russian Revolution pg 156.

worship of images, icons, and other relics from which he expects relief. In the magical power of the sacrament his conception of salvation was identified."[1] Every day has its saint, and every day sees some one going to the church to offer up his petitions to these saints.

The home is in itself a sacred shrine. Every home had its holy corner. There upon the shelf would be some icon or sacred relic which was supposed to keep away evil spirits. Invaribly a candle was standing in front of the icon and in many cases it was always burning. Here in this holy of holies one will see some one of the family kneeling many times during the day in prayer.

"Russia is a country filled with churches, monastaries, shrines, sacred icons, and saints."[2] During the year one will see many peasants going on pilgrimages to these shrines or going to the monastaries where the remains of some saint is supposed to reside. As they grow old their one ambition is to make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. This is especially true if the life which the individual led was loose morally. There was not much religious thought in their actions: they just did these things because the village priest, or the bishop told them they would attain to happiness when they died if they believed and followed their instructions. It had become purely an escape mechanism for the inhabitance of that country.

1 Spinka The Church and the Russian Rev. pg 8

2 Hecker Religion under the Soviets pg 10

"Even to this day the Iverian Virgin stands in Red Square Moscow."[1] As the Red Soldiers parade through the streets and out onto the parade grounds you will find, invariably, some people kneeling and praying there. So strong is their faith in the Virgin that the government up to the present time is afraid to remove it. In return for their devotions the people expect to receive protection and even in some cases miracles to happen. There religion seems to be bound up in the belief of the supernatural power of the saints and icons. During the late war when the Russian Army was meeting with one defeat after another, the Holy Procurator, Rasputin, persuaded the Tsar to parade the Icon of Saint Nicholas before the retreating army in order that the defeats which were befalling them might be changed to victories. It is needless to say, the evil continued until they surrendered to the German army.

"The Russian is acquainted with suffering of all kinds."[2] Many years his crops would fail because of draught, to much rain or too early a fall. Then he had to go hungry the following year. He had a second scourge which was ever haunting him and that was the police. At night they would come to his home, get him out of bed and raid his house. After they had kept him out in the cold for an hour or two they would again allow him to enter. But now the things which the police wanted for his own household would be missing. The peasant had no redress. If

1 Spinka The Church and the Rev. pg 35
2 Olgin The soul of the Rus. Rev. Pg56

he complained to the chief of police, he was liable to be put in jail. But one must not blame the police all together, they generally had to do such things so that they could live. Life was hard for all of the inhabitance. This was especially true if one had not friends who had political influence, or had no money to bribel the police.

"While the peasant is acquainted with all kinds of suffering so he has come to understand the Christ as the Suffering Servant." [1] The physical strong, the mentally awake, and the social Christ he does not know. But the one who was acquainted with grief, and sorrow, and who bor the sins of the world is the Christ who is known by every Russian. One does not have to look far to see this truth; all he has to do is to pick up any novel of the modern Russian writers and he will see quite plainly the suffering Christ and the suffering peasant linked together.

This fact has a direct effect upon the attitude which he takes toward life. He sees all men as common Sufferers here upon this earth. There is no hatred in his heart toward onyone. "The preaching of hatred of the enemy such as disgraced many of the religious presses in America during the war was utterly alien to the Russian."[2] He sees all men sinning, but only sinning so that they can again be forgiven by God. Thus he will reason, "How can God forgive anyone when he has not sinned." Therfore you will find him during his youth leading a care free

1 Hecker Religion under the Soviets pg 5

2 " " " " " " 7

life but as he grows older he will again turn to the Church. The village priest seems to know this, for, he never worries that the Russian will again, turn to the church for solace and confort.

"This is the Creed by which he lives. "God is powerful and good, all men are sinful, God alone is without sin yet God is merciful, he forgives for Christ sake the repentant sinner." [1] Thus with the lack of supernatural moral control and discipline, it is possible for the Russian when his passions are aroused to act cruelly and ruthlessly, usually either with little forthought and seldom with the motive of revenge. With so little moral training in this respect he is still a barbarian.

These are the characteristics of the people in that country where Communism reigns today. We notice they are religious to the very heart. It is not a faith which requires much thinking but it is a faith which is inborn into the very nature of the population. No better place in the world could be found to carry out the Noble Experiment than Russia. The two extremes meet there. The intense simple faith of the peasant and the extreme agnostic philosophy of the communist. It is going to be a conflict which will prove only one thing-- and that is, Religion can be ruled and legislated out of the souls of mankind or religion is a part of Human nature and you must destroy the human race if yourare going to destroy religion. We look forward to the next decade to decide this

1 The Soviets and Religion Hecker--pg 13

question. But let us now turn our eyes back again to that church which is said to be being exterminated, and see whether the government which is persecuting it had a just right. By understanding their faults we who are going to be the leaders in the church of tomorrow might be able to avoid many of the pitfalls.

THE RUSSIAN CHURCH.

Beforeone can understand the effect of Communism upon the Russian Church he must know something about its organization. It is a good example of how the Christian religion can be used by a government for its own benefit and in the end make that religion a force of evil in the world. As we read of the history of the people and the church we wonder why the people did not revolt against the autrocities which were committed in the name of Christ many years before. It is only a beacon light to the church of the future, that when it loses its sense of its mission in the world it too will come to the same end.

We misunderstand the situation of the Russian people many times; that is the reason we are so apt to condemn the Communist for the work which is now being carried on. We fail to see that great movements like this had been brewing for over two hundred years, and that the people bore with the evil until they just had to revolt. If it had not come in 1917 it surely would have come in the next decade for the people had stood the evil too

many years.

The history of the Russian Orthodox Church is a study in itself. All I can hope to do here is to give a broard and general outline of how th church became subjected to the rule of the state and then how the state agains freed itself from the churhh. The interesting part of the story is this; that on the two occassions the church protested. The first time it did not want to be united with the state and the after it had been linked with the state for more than two hindred years it did not want to lose its influence.

It was during the first centuries of Christianity that the Greek Orthodox Chruch sent its missionaries into Russia to make Christians out of the people in that country. Some say Andrew the Disciple of Jesus was the missionary who first made converts.there. But whoever did the initial work this remains true, by the end of the eighth century , Christianity had been well established in that country, and the Patriarch of Constantinople was the head of the church. He made all theappointments of fo the Metropolitans in Russia, and without his benediction they could never hope to be leaders in the church. They in turn went home and ordanined the Bishops and the priest in their local parishes. This was the constrution of the church until the early part of the thirteenth century when the Greek Empire fell into the hands of the Turk and Constantinople no longer the possession of the

Greeks. One of the Metropolitans went to Constantinople and succeeded in having himself sanctified as Patriarch of Russia. From that time on the Russian Church has been entirely free from any connections with the Greek Chruch. The apostolic benediction now could be passed down from one generation to another, and the Patriarch of the Russian Church could make any one he wished Patriarch for now he had that power.

From the thirteenth century until 1721 the church enjoyed this freedom. The state and the Church were separate, and each went about its own work. But in that year, Peter the Great, who was the unifier of Russia , saw the great power which the church weilded over the people, and decided that there could not be two governments in any country. So he immediately proceeded to unite the two forces under one head. His first step was to disband the church organization which existed at that time. The Patriarch with his three Methopolitans and numerous bishops which formed the ruling Sobor were disbanded, and in their place the Tsar put his own organization.

His orgainization consisted of the Holy Procurator as the head of the Church. He was appointed by the Tsar and was ruled by the Tsar. The Holy Procurator then appointed the three Metropolitans of the country to sit with him in the organization which was now known as the Holy Synod. This small group of men selected, bishops, priest and laymen to the nember of five hundred to make up the rest of the Holy Synod. They were divided into to

two houses, with one house higher than the other. Once a year the Holy Procurator was supposed to call a meeting of the Sobor to make rules for the church. If it was necessary, he was allowed to call special sessions. The organization had no control over the doctines of the church but only over the laws which would affect the working order. Dr. Spinka has written, "That the state control over the church hampered to a graat extent its spiritual development is clearly seen. It was Peter's ecclesiastical appointees who have been the chief cause of the decline of the Russian Church."[1]

With the offices depending directly or indirectly upon the sanction of the Tsar, it can plainly be seen that the good which the church would do would be depending upon the desires of the ruler. It is true that at first he did not interfere with the government of the church, but as the years went on, and the Tsar saw the great influence the church had upon the people, he came more and more to depend upon it to carry out his orders.

Here and there thruout the country, one would see the symtoms of unrest breaking out. The colleges especially were the breeding places. The people were revolting a against the autocratic rule of the government. Society after society was formed, and during the summer the students went forth to try to organize the peasant into a revolt. Many of the students were killed, many more were exiled to Siberia. So it happened that Lenin's brother was caught in one of these plots, and was shot. Then, Lenin, to

1 Spinka The church and the Russian Revolution pg 43

carry on the work of his brother, joined the revolutionary movement, and became the leader eventually of the Communist party.

One must not think the Nihilist movement or the revolutionary movement was a sudden growth. It took years of toil, thousands were killed, and ten thousand were exiled to Siberia. Months and months these secret organizations would plan and plot the downfall of the Tsar, only to fall into the trap set by the secret police when they were about to assasinate the monarch. Sometimes, they were successful. Nicholas 1 met with an untimely death because he persisted in picking up one of his guards who had been blown off the back of his buggy as he was riding through the streets of Petrograd. As he stooped over the guard who was slowly dying, one of the Nihilist came running up asking him if he was hurt. To his reply, the Tsar said, "No thank God." The Nihilist had a second bomb under his coat and said as he threw it, "It is too late to Thank God." The bomb exploded and killed the Tsar immediatly. But the Tsars were born autocrats: they never would learn; they persisted in ruling with an iron hand; they still insisted, "people were swine and did not know how to rule themselves." And the church was brought in to help the government. Ten thousand school teachers were exiled to Siberia because the priest and the bishops reported to the central government their teachings in the public schools. The literature and the press were

censured,and all meetings had to have the sanction of the government.

There is only one end which one can look forward too with such a government, and with any organization which is connected with it, and that is its downfall. It did not come in 1890 when Nicholas 1 was killed, but there was a smoldering fire which burst forth again in 1905 only to be put out with much blood shed: and there was the third outburst of 1917 which did succeed.

There were two High Procuratores who stand out in the history of the Church: they were K.P. Pobyedonostzev who served from 1893 to 1905 and the other the famous Holy Devil or Rasputin who served from 1913 to 1917. The formerwas noted for his efforts and his success in bringing the church and the state together for the express purpose of carrying out the desires of the Tsar. Pobyedonostzev, was a man who was trained for a military careed, but was siezed upon by the Tsar to be the High Procurator of the Church. He was noted for his zeal in farretting out the counter revolutionary forces in the country. He, it was, who installed the Checka or the Secret police system which became in the end the dread and terror of all Russia. He ruled with an autocratic hand, and, all from the patriarch of the church to the most lowly village priest lived in constant dread that he would in some way or another be removed from his place and exiled to Siberia. All Russia breathed a sigh of relief when he died for now they hoped they would be

free again to carry out their church work unhampered.

Their hopes were short lived. In 1913 the most famous of all the Holy Procurators came to the head of the church.Julius Hecker writes of him thus, "Rasputin was a licentuous ignorant, drunken peasant who came to power because of his forceful and brutal personality and animal magnetism which lured women into his net."[1] He had been brought into court circles by some woman who had been traveling through Siberia and had heard about his success in curing ills. The youngest daughter of the Tsar had been suffering from internal hemorrahages, and not a doctor in all the country of Russia could cure her. Slowly the child was dying, but it is said, "that just as soon as Rasputin stepped inside of the court the child began to get well." From that time on, he was a court favorite. He received for hiself, and for his friends every position he asked for of the Tsar. One writer says of him, "Of a psychopathic religiosity, the Empress was completely under the sway of Rasputin so that the chief qualification of all who courted her favor was a word from the all powerful religious humbug."[2] All departments in the government were interfered by him, and it is now rumored that the beloved Grand Duke Nicholas who was commander in chief of the army was removed because of the suggestion from this man. Finally one of the plots to assasinate him succeeded. He was lured into the house of Prince Yusupov and there murdered by the host with the

1 Hecker Religion under the Soviets pg 25
2 Olgin The soul of the Russina Rev. pg 121

assistance of P.M. Purishkevich, leader of the conservaties in the Duma

The church went from bad to worse. Prince N.D. Zhevakhov was to follow in the office of Rasputin. To him the Tsars perogatives had a divine basis, for he was the anointed by the Lord, and any opposition to his will was sinful. Such were the personalities in whose hands the supreme direction of the Russian Church was placed during those fearful years of testing between 1914-17. It is no wonder that an organization so reactionary so thoroughly subservient to the Tsar absolutism, should come to be regarded in the same light with the government autrocities and that all who desired the rightful and necessary modifications in the system of rule came to think of the church as the second chief obsticle in the path ofprogress.

As one views the condtions in that country today he wonders why the Tsar with his officials did not see the hand writing upon the wall. Could theynot see the unrest of the people? Could they not see the unrest in the universities? Could they not see the unrest in the court circles? But autocratic governments are not acquainted with history. If they were they would have seen the same condtions arising in France before the French revolution. The climax of it came in the cry Liberty,Equality and Fraternity. Not so with Nicholas 11 When people cried for bread, they were thrown in jail. When they paraded on Easter Sunday to petition him for a better government, they were shot down like enemies, and

when organizations were found which would reform the government the members were driven into exile or were executed. Such were the conditions in Russia when all the world was making such rapid progress in civilization.

Those who were in the court circles and who would reform the government were given deaf ears. Count Tolstoy is the most notable example of one who would help, but on each occasion he met with untold opposition. It led him to the teachings of Jesus and his doctrine of passive resistance. He became the founder of a cult which even to this day forms one of the minority groups in Russian life.

One only has to watch the elections to the Duma to see how the people were awakening to the evils of the government. Instead of the priests, royalist, and the conservatives being elected the offices became filled with Bolsheviks. This party was the only one which ran in direct oppostion to the governmental policies. Each time they came into power, the Tsar used his power to disband the Duma and to rule the country himself. Thus for ten years at a time, the people would have no voice as to what the government should do. With the return of larger, and larger groups of reactionary men the Tsar ought to have been able to see what the people were thinking about, yet he went along his old way unheeding t the hand writing upon the wall. Uprising, agitations, elections, all went unheeded until that fateful day in May 1917.

The Rise of Communism

We must now turn our eyes toward the years of 1917 when the time again became ripe for a revolution. The Russian armies were suffering one defeat after another, on their eastern front. The people at home were starving and riots were breaking out thruout the country. At the same time the socialist and the bolshevik groups were spreading broadcast through the country the evils of the Tsar regime and the need for unity between the working men of the world. The riots grew until in March of that year enough of the soldiers had abandoned the trenches, for Kerensky, who was noted for his liberal tendencies to take command and overthrow the Tsar Government. The first idea od the leaders of the new government was to make it into a democracy, but as the months went on the Bolsheviks gained power, and in October of that year the existing democratic government fell into the handsof the bolsheviks. Since that time they have been the ruling power in the country.

In governmental practice the Bolsheviks are practically the same as the preceding Tsar regime. It is autocratic in that it has a Central Committee which makes the laws for the country instead of the Tsar and the never functioning Duma. Stalin, who is at the head of the Central Committee today is the autocrat of the country. It is he who dictates the policies and so far he has been successful in

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surrounding himself with men who are loyal to him and who are willing to carry out the programs which he formulates. The secret police system,which was started by Pobyedonstzev or what was known throughout Russia as the Check, has now been replaced by the Soviet organizaion known as the Ogpu. It too breaks into the homes of the humble peasant and arrests him without serving a summons. It too farrets out all the counter revolutionist in the country and brings them before a secret courtfor trial. What becomes of those who have these trials is only known to the court and the accused. Some are killed without any other court appeals, some are exiled to Siberia where so many of the Bolsheviks were under the Tsar regime.

The people have an opportunity to vote now. That is if you belong to a trade union, or as the government says, "to some productive kind of labor." All business is run upon a communistic basis. For instance, men in a factory will elect from its group their forman, and the officers of the factory. The city government is carried on in the same manner. Each of the productive organizations meet in their local unions and decide who will run the city. The country is divide up into districts and the officers of the districts come together and elect from their midst the officers of the next higher commune, and so on until one comes to the central committee which makes the laws for the country. But this thing in noticeable, while you have a great many parties holding office in the shop committees, by the time you get to the c ntral council you

have only Bolsheviks. All the rest of the opposing parties are lost in the communes. The people vote now. But not in secret, nor either by ballot ; nor either by yea and nay but by the show of hands. This kind of voting might mean anything to us of the west, but to the Russian it is a great advancement over not voting at all.

I believe I am right in saying the peasant is uninterested in the government. All he cares about is something to eat, a home to live in and a job so he can work and get enough money to buy his few necessities of life. If these are supplied to him he is willing to have the country ruled by any one. The Soviets are seeing that the peasant receives his full share of work, and at the same time a certain amount of money to keep him satisfied and contented. You will find some discontented but these you will find in every country in the world. Most authorities, that I have read, are of the opinion you will find less in Russia today than you did under the old form of government. If this were not true, the one million Bolsheviks could not rule the other one hundred and forty millions. The people have a hand in the governement, but their vote, and their voice does not change the governmental policies.

Governmental Policies.

Once the Bolsheviks were in power, they began the work they had dreamed of for more than fifty years. The leaders, who were exile, now came home and assumed the leadership of this new government. The principles of

Karl Marx which they had talked about and had dreamed about were now entered into upon a large scale. The Central Committee , or the ruling body of the govennment, exterminated all the opposing parties. As the years have gone on only those of the most radical tendenci s have been able to obtain a seat in this committee. Immediatly everything in the country was nationalized-- so that in a day this small group of men had complete control of land, industry, and natural resources, -- all except the soul of the people, and souls they immediately began to mold to the policies of the government.

All the industry in the country was taken over by the government and operated by thier representatives. When one considers that in the whole country of Russia, which covers about one sixth of the land surface of the earth, there were fewer industries than in the state of Connecticut one can get some idea of the lack of industrialization. But if they had none in 1917, this is not true in the year 1931. Three years ago they started upon their five year plan. In a word it is this: the leaders of the government hope that in 1933 their country will be fully industrialized so that they will be able to free from every country in the world. Many mistakes have been made but t o the present time it seems as if their goal will be made.

All social work is being carried on by the government. No organization is allowed to distribute help to those in need unless sanctioned by the local commune. At the same time the old age are pensioned, the hospital

service is free or at a minimmum cost; the local clinics take care of all sick cases, the day nursery is open to all regardless of color, faith, or party affiliation. While all these things are done for the peasants, those who were rich, or are supposed to have money are not given these privileges; they have to pay the full price for everything. The professional men, as the doctors, lawers, ect, are only allowed to charge a certain amount for their labors. In some ways Russia is better to-day than under the Tsar rule, in other ways it is much worse.

The economic policies of the country have also changed. The land was all parceled out to the peasant, with the stipulation that he had to work his ground. The government, in turn, would supply all the farm machinery and the stock but the peasant must sow the seed, take care of the crops, and harvest them in the fall. The government now buys the grain from the farmer at a stated price. At the present time eight hours constitutes a days work, and for every day which is worked they are credited with those hours by a government agent. At the end of the season the peasant is given a vacation. The peasant never thot of a vacation under the old system, and he never thought of the government taking enough interest in him to supply him with machinery and the latest advice in agricultural methods. It is a change; the old world has past away and today

they are living in a new. In this country the poor are elevated, and the rich are looked down upon. They have reversed everything in the world.

The social life of the country is directed by the policies of the Central Committee. The lecture system which is in operationhas for its purpose the informing the people about the evils of religion, the menace of capitalism and the Glories of Communism and such topics which would bolster up the present government. The dramas and the theatres have the Red soldier or the Bolshevik government as the heroes. All other forms of amusements are suppressed. At the social gatherings which are fostered by the trained social workers of the government, such games as taking a machine gun apart and putting it together again, and problems pertaining to army manoevers are taught the people. The design behind everything which is done is to promote communisms and to prepare for the forthcoming world revolution which will sweep capitalism off the earth.

Most important of all the policies which came from the 1917 revolution is the present day educational program. The Communist believing that the future of their party lies in the education of the youth, proceede immediatly to substitute teachers of communistic tendencies for others. The schools connected with the church were suspended, or either taken over by the government and teachers supplied for the classes.

Priest were forbidden to teach. Boys and girls now became compeled to go to school until they were fourteen years old, after that they were allowed to go to work. The subjects taught are quite similar to our own, except that from the very beginning of their work they are given courses in natural science. The purpose is two fold, in the first place they believe they can make a race of super men by teaching them science for they view all the progressive nations of the world and see they are well advanced in this field. In the second place they feel it is the best way to combat this superstition called religion. At the present time a boy or girl may not receive religious training from any one except his parents until he is eighteen years old. By this time the government hoped to have him educated to such a degree that he will not care for any kind of religion.

While the youth are being educated in the day time, the men and women who have to work during the day, are educated in the night schools. Courses of every nature are offered, from sewing to courses in foreign languages and philosophy. Those who cannot go to school can go to the libraries which are in every town and village th throughout the whole country. It might be true that many of them at the present time have not a great many volumns but as the years go on more books are added. Eventually that country will have as many libraries as America and the people will have no excuse for not

being informed upon any subject in the world.

Decrees Against The Church

These things the present government is doing for the people. It was because the leaders made these great promises to the people that they were able to overthrow the liberal democratic government of Kerensky. Now in power they began to make decrees which the people would never support if they knew they would follow. The religious decrees came in 1917, 1923, 1925,1921, 1929. They have been modified and addded to as the years have gone on, but in general they have kept the same tone. It must be kept in mind, that like all laws passed bythe government to the present time, the religious laws are not inforced in those communities or sections of the country where the opposition is too great. In this respect the communist has been wise for the peasant has not revolted enmass as he would if inforced with an iron hand.

These are the laws dealing with the church and religion as modified up to 1929. For further and fuller context see International Concilitory Magazine for June 1931.

1 In the regulation pursuant to decree of the Soviet of the People's Commissaries of January 23,1918 in regard to separation of Church and State and schools from Church are embraced the churhes, religious groups sects, religious movements and other cultural associations of every description.

2 Religious associations of professing citizens of all cults are registered in the form of religious societies of groups of believers.

3 A religious society is a local association of believing citizens who have reached the age of 18 years, to the number of not less than 20 persons who have associated for the joint satisfaction of their religious needs.

Religious societies and groups of believers do not enjoy the rights of a juridic person.

4 For the satisfaction of their religious needs, believers who compose a religious society may by contract receive for free use from central committee or from the city soviet, special houses for prayer and objects exclusively designated for cult purposes.

5 Religious associations are forbidden: (a) the creation of mutual aid banks, cooperatives industrial associations, and generally to use any property in their control for any other purpose except the satisfaction o f their religious needs;(b) to assist their fellow members by giving them material support; (c) the organization of special meetings for children youth and women for prayer purposes andgenerally biblical literary, needlw work, and other meetings for the teaching of religion ect, further meetings groups, circles, and departments also the arranging of excursions and children's gatherings to found libraries and reading rooms, to organize santoria and medical assistance.

6 The teaching of any kind of religiousfaith in government, public and private establishments for instruction and education is forbidden. Such instructions may be permitted exclusively at special theological courses organized by citizens of the USSR.

7 The activities of persons engages in the service of the cult are limited to the territory in which the belivers reside permanently.

8 Members of groups of believers and of religious societies have the right to effect collections and to accept voluntary contributions within the prayer building as well as outside ofsame, but solely among members of the particular cult and solely for purposes connected with the upkeep of the prayer building.

It can be seen at once what is the object of the government. It plans first to make religion almost an impossibility as far as they are concerned. All the

burden of running a church organization is thrown upon the people in the local community, with no redress in law, no connection between sects of similar belief, or financial help from the larger organization, no head of the church who will guide the policies no religious instruction given to its communicants, and with the threat that the government will sieze the church building when a greater need according to them arises. Yet the religious spirit is alive in Russia today, maybe stronger than it has been in may years.

THE EFFECTS UPON THE RELIGIOUS WORLD.

Effects upon the People.

Let us now turn to the attitude which the church and the people of Russia views these new laws. The year 1917 found the church trying hard to reform itself. ArchBishop Agathangel called a meeting of the Orthodox Church to be held in Moscow beginning on the 25th of July 1917 The proclamation read thus

> The governmental overthrow which has taken place has radically changed our social and political lige, securing even for the church the possibility and right of free organization. The secret dream of the Russian Orthodox people has become realizable, and the calling of the local Sobor in the hearest possible future now becomes necessary..[1]

He immediately went about to appoint committees for the forth coming convention which was to bring together all the Greek Orthodox Churches in the country.

1 Vvedensky--- The Church and the Government Pg 59

Three days before the assembly, the committee gathered in the God Fearing City of Moscow, to formulate the projects for the forthcoming convention. They included re-organization of the schools, and parish constitutions, and a mass of other items too numerous to mention. The government granted them the right to meet but ask that their business be submitted to the Minister of Confessions for approval. The government even went so far as to give the convention one million rubles to cover the expenses.1 But it must be also said, that the government had their representative present to see that all things were carried on in accord to their policies.

It was the first Sobor after two centuries of oppression by the Holy Synod. The Sobor contained 564 delegates, representing the bishops, priest, laymen, some of the latter were professors, two were princes, and counts. The four theological seminaries had sixteen delegates. At last the Sobor was to meet. It is described thus:

> In the year one thousand nine hundred and seventeen since the birth of Christ, on August 15 in the revered Assumption of the Most Holy Mother of God, in the God saved city of Moscow, in the Great Cathedral of the Assumption, the Holy Sobor of the Orthodox Russian Church was opened with the rites specially prepared for the occassion by the Holy Sobor. The liturgy was sung by Cladimir of Kiev, Platon of Tiflis, and Benjamin of Petrograd. Occupying the seats of honor among the worshippers were the primier Minister A.T. Kerensky, the minister of the Interior, N.D.Avksentev and the minister of confessions, A.V.Kartashev with his associate C.C. Kotyarovsky.

1 Olgin The Soul of Russian Revolution. pg 8?

From the very beginning of the council they were divided into at least three groups. There was one group who wished to keep the old system which was in operation under the Tsar and which caused the down fall of the church. There was another group which wished to reform the church in a moderate way, and there was a third group which wanted to make radical changes in the whole of the church program. Seeing that they could not agree upon a program they proceeded to the election of the Patriarch to lead the new church, in hopes that he would be able to unify the leaders.

There were to be three nominated for the office, and then the names put into a box and the one first selected was to be the Patriarch. Antony the metropolitan of Kharkov was the first one to get the majority vote. The third ballot gave Tikon of Moscow the nomination; and the third nomination was Saraphin. November the first was the fatal day when the destiny of the Russian Church was cast. An eye witness describes the selection of the Patriarch thus:

> I shall never forget the moment when the elder of the recluse, monks, Father Alex drew from the urn which stood all the previous night before the icon of the Vladimir Mother of God the slip wuth the name Metropolitan of Moscow Tikon. The cry of "God's chosen one" arose throughout the church. And the people from beginning regarded the prelate as such, seeing in him their father whom it was possible and necessary to love.[1]

But they were not all agreed upon the restoration of the Patriarch. There were only two hundred and sixty five present out of the five hundred and sixty four

1 Spinka The Church and the Russian Rev. pg 90

delegates. When it came to vote upon this momentous question it was found that only one hundred and forty one were in favor of the retention of thePatriarch and one hundred and twelve were against and the other twelve abstaining from voting all together. In reality the whole policy of the future church of Russia was carried by the one hundred and forty one delegates.

The church now came into direct conflict with the government for the first time on the question of the separation of the schools and church. All schools, prochial included, were to come under the supervision o of the Minister of Education. Teachers in these institutions were to keep their present positions, but the teaching of the catechism was to be radically limited. Immediately the Sobor objected but the government stood firm, and they made the teaching of religion an elective instead of a necessity. The Sobor made and office which would fight against the incrochment of the government upon their education of the youth for they had no idea of ever relenquishing this point for it had been the main source of their church membership all through the years. The fight lasted between the two until October 25 when the Bolsheviks gained power to overthrow the then existing government and institute Communism.

The result of the election of Tikon was a direct challenge to the Soviet government. The church had retained its autocratic governemnt and the leaders were

for a Communistic form. The church now became willing to join forces with any reactionary or counter revolutionary forces in the country. The church joined forces with General Komilov who was leading the revolt against the Communist because the peasants were siezing the land printing presses, and factories and because the new government re-iterated its stand upon the separation of the church and the state, and church and schools. When one considers that the church owned millions and millions of acres of land and was not paying any taxes upon it, and the printing presses were dominated by their rule, one can see the great lost this organization received with one stroke of the pen. On the other hand the peasant wanted land and peace and the Bolshevik government gave them both, and they for the time being were content to settle down upon the farms.

The church declared open was upon the government with the result many of the priest and laiety were put in prison,and when the opposition became too strong t they were tried for counter revolution and sentenced to Siberia or death. Thus we in America heard about the great calamity which was befalling the Russian Church.

The Schism in the Church.

But there was another event in the history of Russia which tended to rent the church apart and that was the famine of 1921. Up to this time, the church difficulties pertained mostly to schools, land, property,

and money. Now the time came when the church had an opportunity to show the real spirit of Christ and it showed quite plainly that it was no match to the situation. Too long it had been served and now it lost the art of serving.

Famines in Russia are not infrequent. They can be expected any year, but the one in 1921 came at a crisis for the church. The peasant had sowed his grain in the early part of the year, but as the season progressed the expected rains never came. The surplus grain had been taken away from him the previous season by the government to buy the much needed machines for the country. The time had now come when he must have something to eat or to starve for the grain he had depended upon for his winter use had failed to mature.

The government made an immediate call for help. All Russia rose to the occassion except the Church. They alone refused to give to their full capacity. The government knew the financial status and immediately took steps to assert its power and at the same time to destroy the church. In the first place a decree went forth throughout the land saying,"that all the gold and silver vessels which were not used for the immediate purpose of carrying on the church services were to be turned over to the local commune and they in turn to send the vessels to the Central Committee in Moscow. The vessels in turn were to be sold and the money thus gainedwas to be turned into the Famine Relief Fund.

Tikon the Patriarch of the church replied, "The Orthodox church was willing to give a certain amount of money which could be used for the famine relief, but the vessels had been consecrated to God and they could only be used for His purpose." At the same time the Patriarch issued an order to the effect that the people should resist all incrochments upon the property of the church. When the soldiers came to the larger towns to take the vessels they were met with little or no oppositions, but in the rural sections the were some times met with armed forces. The peasant folk were thrown into jail, the priest were tried and exiled, but the government was determined to break the rule of the church at all cost. Under no condition was the vessels spared--age-beauty-holy significance-cost-rarity- all were brushed aside and the vessels taken. Some churches offered to raise the money of the worth of the vessels, but the government was determined now to have the vessels and not the money.

The second step taken by the Church was to anathamize the Russian Soviet Rulers. In a decree signed by the Patriarch the church said:

> By the authority which is given us from God we forbid you to approach the sacrements of Christ, we anathamatize you if you still bear the Christian names, and even by your birth belong to the Orthodox Church.[1]

It was now evident to the rulers of the country upon whose side the church was on. It was evident they would work for the return of the old regime and it

1 Spinka The Church and the Russian Rev. pg 63

formed the nucleus of an organization which would forment counter revolutionary plots. At times it looked as if the church would win--but today it has modified its methods so as to conform in some respects to the wishes of the government.

The Effect upon Church Unity.

The famine had a disastorous effect upon the unity of the church. T here were certain churches in the Greek Orthodox church who were progressive enough to see that helping you neighbor who is in need is fulfilling one of the laws of God. Then again the vessels of silver and gold are no good when men and women are starving. This group(most of the churches in the large vities) aided the government in their famine relief work in the stricken areas. The church now split and the one group took the name of The Living Church and the other the Orthodox Church. So they have continued until the present day. The original Patriarchial curch still having the most members and the Living Church trying to reform the old and make religion more vital to the people of the country. The leadership has a wider vision than those of the old church yet they are hampered like all other religious sects in that country from the lack of communication with one another. It might be said, they alone have read the signs of the times and have come to the conclusion religion must change in Russia if it is going to live. So we find them today

trying to mold their program to serve the people as they tried to do in 1921 during the famine.

Insofar as the state was concerned they had killed two birds with one stone. They had gotten the gold and silver vessels which amounted to millions of dollars for the famine relief under the pretext of helping those in need; in the second place they had made a split in the organizaion of the church which was to work for disharmony. They knew, like every one else, that a house divided against itself will eventually fall. So they hope that by playing one group off against the other the church in Russia will be doomed. To help the cause alon Tikon was put in jail and kept there for more than two years. All this time, which was one of the most critical, the church had no one to lead her in her activities. As the years have gone on, the gap between these two branches of the church has grown greater and at the present time it looks as if they never will come together again upon any kind of a preogram of religion.

It was no until June 1922 that Tikon was released from jail after siging the following document. Most men today say, " the document was drawn up by the Soviet Government and presented to Tikon with the agreement that he would receive his freedom if he signed it.

"Having been brought up in a monarchial society and until my arrest having been under the influence of anti Soviet persons, I was very hostile to the Soviet Government. Recognizing the correctness of the Supreme Courts accusation and its sentence, which is in conformity

with the clauses of the Criminal code, I repent of all my action against the Government and request the Supreme Court to change the sentence and set me free. Herewith I declare that I am no more an enemy of the Soviet Government. I have finally and resolutely severed all connections with the foreign and international Monaechists and White Guard counter revolutionaries.[1]

Signed
Tikon
Patriarch.

The simple people were persuaded he signed under threats of the Government. They still covered his path with flowers werever he went. He has hever made his peace with the Living Church. Instead he issued a notice denouncing their program as Unorthodox and the work of the devil. Yet he reiterated his denial to opposition to the Soviet State. Tikon now gave up his life of activity and want to a monastary so as to with draw from the world. He was not a strong leader or a man with a large vision for the church. The people honored him only because of the past tradition which had been built up, that the Patriarch is the representative of Christ here upon the earth. He died in 1925 but not until he had past on his office to Metropolitan Peter of Kiev. The church was not allowed to hold a Sobor meeting so he had to use his perogative of passing his office down to one of the Metropolitans. The church is still carrying on in its old ways, and it does not seem to have the power to renew or to regenerate itself.

Effect upon the Minority Groups.

Let us turn our attention to the minority groups for they alone are trying to face the problems of religion in Russia. I will take up the Living Church first and then some of the Protestant groups which have been making freat headway in that country since the downfall of the Tsar Regime. One writer has said, " "The Living Church has not made any appeal to the masses. They are unaware of its existance."[1] This might be true or false, for others have said, "The Russian Orthodox Church has lost many of its members which are going to the evangelical faiths especially the Baptist."[2] But whether the Orthodox Church is winning or losing its members this fact remains true, that the minority groups alone have been the ones who have been willing to face the problems of religion and have been willing to map out a program for the future of the country. If communism is going to kill religion it must first cope with these vital religious beliefs which are being expressed in the messages of the Priest of the Living Church.

In 1923 the Living Church held its first Council. They came together for several purposes. In the first place to make their peace with the Soviet Government, in the next place to select leaders who would carry out their programs, in the third place to outline programs which would carry theprinciples of Jesus and to show the

1 Lawton -- The Russian Revoltion Pg 256
2 Spinka The Church and the Rus. Rev Pg 94

the Atheistic Covernment religion was not anti scientific.

Bishop Antonine said;" Bolshevism was not incompatible with the church. I can remain true to my monastic traditions, and I am ready to fight against any protestants. I am not in favor of any changes in religion from those of the past." [1]

Vedensky said; "In as much as Marxism was materalistic and atheistic, it was wrong in its philosophy of life but it remained true to the Soviet Government, dominated by the thinking of Karl Marx, and it was the only government that was trying to enthrown the principles of Jesus Christ. Lenin, he said, was dear to the Church."[2]

Krasnitsky said: " The Tsar Church was the tool of the aitocrat, the Living Church favored revolution. We believe, that by working from within we can destroy the bourgeois influence of the church. We support the Red army because it is necessary for world revolution. The Communist are wrong in believing they can destroy religion. Otherwise their program is immaculate and unquestionable. The Red Army is a Christian Army. Christ would bless the Bolsheviks if he were on earth today."[3]

At the close of the meeting they passed this resolution.

The world has become divided into two classes, capitalistic exploiters and proletariat, on whose toil and blood the capitalist world builds its prosperity. Christianity cannot remain indifferent. The council proclaims capitalism to be a deadly sin, and

1 Lawton The Russian Rev. Pg 252
2 " " " " 253
3 " " " " "

the fight against the same to be sacred to a Christian. In the Soviet Power the council sees the lead of the world toward fraternity, equality and peace.

The same council said; "The Patriarch Tikon was a denier of the true testament of Christ and a betrayer of the Church, and sentenced him to dismissal from the Church." It closed by sending the blessings of the Holy Fathers to Lenin.

There are the questions which the Living Church now faced, the subjection of the Church to the State, The rule of the monastic overlords, the strangle hold of the Bishops over the rank and file of the clergy, the place of self expression on the part of the masses of believers, doctrinal sterility, and finally and probably most sinister the ascetic philosophy of life a heritage from the decadent Byzantium of a thousand years back.[3]

Effect upon the Living Church.

It was no simple task to reform the Orthodox Church for they wer cutting at the roots of the Russian Church but the state had helped a great deal by forcing the church to separate itself from all worldly influences. It called for men of far vision and a laborious job of evanglization, education, and socialization of the masses of believers. There are the reforms whcih were submitted and which formed the basis for the Christian movement now being carried on in Russia

3 Hecker -The Soviet and Religion pg 126

1 Re-establishment of evangelical teachings of the early Christian Church

2 Development of teaching concerning man as the crown and culmination of the acts of wisdom in the creative gorce.

3 Development of teaching concerning God as a source of truth, love and mercy.

4 Development of teaching of salvation of God's re-establishment of the sonship of man through love at the cross.

5 The Christian Church as a divine human union for the purpose of realizing God's truth upon the earth.

6 Eternity as an organic development, and culmination of the moral perfection of human personality.

The state in order to protect itself against ecclesiasticism had created an unusually favorable situation for a spiritual religion. These men were also willing to tackle the ethical questions which had long been passed by, by the Orthodox Church. Ethics and morals were never considered under the old Tsar regime because they persecuted all the sects which did not agree with the State Church.

Ethical Reforms.

The Living Church is now vitally interested in the morals and the ethics of the People. This was completely lacking in the old church system. As I have pointed out

Hecker The Soviets and Religion pg 127

before, their belief was in icons and holy relics. The new church has thrown all these things away and like the government is trying to up lift the masses of people to a better standard of life. They (the church) believe that religion is necessary if the people are going to rise, therefore the social gospel of Jesus is being stressed and evangelical preaching is being carried out in the pulpits. These are some of the ethical reforms they have agreed upon in their present day church movements.

1 Development of moral teaching of salvation withing the world in the common environment of a growing life of humanity.

2 Rejection of moastic teaching of individual salvation by means of denying the world and scorning the natural demands of nature--leading to moral decadence and annihilation of the human race.

3 Work as a joyful expression of the fulness of life and the guarantee of social prosperity.

4 Moral and material support of state measures directed for the welfare of the improvement of conditions of the unfortunate invalids, widowers and orphans.

5 Finally the reform demanded a thorough reform of the congregational life of the church, asking for close co-operation and participation of the laity in the work of the church, with rights to elect its pastor, all sharing in the report of the church and having one general treasury, developing works of charity giving religious education to the young- opening wide y the opportunity of worth laymen to enter pastoral activity.[1]

There is in Russia today and it's growing a silent slow moving breaking down of cults and dogams, superstitions and the rule of the church. "Tikon stands to the people the symbol of the old regime, and order which the rank and file have been familiar with through the centuries.

1 Living Church Publication No.10 Oct 1922 Ph 17-18

The gather there adherence through wide spread ignorance and superstition and those who cling to the old beliefs and worships."[1] The day of the Patriarchial regime is gone. The episcopate are today without a leader, and many do not know who their bishop is at the present time. They have been forced to live without outside contacts, and the priests have been forced to live their own lives, with the result it has forced them to an apologetic study of preaching.

This has brought about more lay activity and more preaching in the church than in any other time in its history. Hecker says, "Now all the institutions, that came down from the old regime the first thing in Soviet Russia is the right to worship as one pleases."[2] Everything else is censured, the theatre, the cinema, the press, even concerts and public lectures on any subject. But the freedom of the pulpit is thus far secure. It has also made the priest tobe social reformers, prophets, and teachers because the public mandates forbid them to enter politics. Here is Metropolitan Vedenske lecturing thruout the country to large audiences and challenging all the atheist to a debate. This is not only true with the Russian religious leaders. Sherwood Eddy tells when he was in Russia he accused the government of not allowing religious meetings to be held. The authorities denied the fact, and challenged him to a debate to be held in the largest

1 Stanley High-- Christ. Cent. Oc 23'24

2 Hecker Religion uneder the Soviets Pg 126

hall in Moscow on a religious topic. Tickets were sold at a price which would be equivalent to five dollars in Americal money. Before the night of the debate, every seat in the auditorium was sold. When the night of the debate came, people by the thousands, he says, stood out in the rain waiting for an opportunity to get inside. The proceeds of the debate were turned over to the famine relief fund. This is Russia where the religious spirit is dead.

Here again is the paper, The Messenger, of the Holy Synod enjoying a larger circulation than ever before. It might be true that the government owns all the printing presses but the literature of the church is and can be printed in these offices. One officer in one of these printing concerns when remonstrated because he took the churches literature while the government was atheistic, replied, "Well at least they pay their bells on time and the atheistic society does not." Religious material can be printed but they like everyone else must pay the government price at the government printing shops.

Turning to the Theological shcools we see a new teaching being promoted. The Living Church is the only institution which is allowed at the present time to teach theology. The Orthodox Church to date has no method to train its priest for the future work of the Church. The emphasis is now placed upon the social teachings of Jesus, and these reform preachers are

the ones who, it is hoped,will unify the church and in the future will save the religious life of their country. All the forces in the world have neen brought to bare upon the church at one time, " the old order changeth to the new." Whether it wants to or not the church is forced to reform from without and from within.

In an article in the Christina Century, Stanley High says, "There are no religious persecutions except those growing from the natural result of the revolution, and with attempts to stamp out counter revolution there has not been any warfare upon the church."[1] Thus one who reads about these persecutions must consider the source from whence they come. McCullagh, who has written a voluminous book upon the church in Russia has a highly colored report growing out of his adherence to one of the so called persecuted churches as he believes it to be. He alone sees the great evil in Bolshevism upon Christianity. All others look at it as a cleansing fire which will burn away the dross.

Effects upon the Sects.

Russia has always been a land of many sects. While they were never strong yet they existed in large numbers. Before the war the Greek Orthodox Church claimed 85% of the people. Along the boarders of Poland the Roman Catholic Church flourished, up near the Finish boarders one would find large communities of Lutherans. But in all, those outside of the State Church formed the minority group. They were kept thus by the persecutions of the Tsar regime.

Today the situation is reversed. No longer are the people forced to belong, or are they threatened or punished if they do not go to church. They are free to join whatever organization they wish, and many are leaving the S ate Church to join the small sects. When one now considers that instead of 85% of the people belonging to the Greek Church, the estimate is only 65% belong now. We can see how fast they are losing their members at the present time.

I will mention only a few of the many sects found in that country today. Under the Tsar these same societies which are flourishing today would have been subpressed. There are as many cults in Russia today as one would find in the city of Los Angeles.

Many of these sects have perculiarities which set them off from all the rest of the world. Maybe they will base their whole religion upon one verse in the bible. Thus we see a sect calling themselves the Mutes. They refuse to speak for they have taken vows of silence. The police have arrestes them, but no amount of punishment upon their part can make them speak.

There is a second sect known as the Hlesty. They believe that every man can become a God and every woman can become the mother of God. They have a moral code prohibiting strong drinks, attending feasts, weddings, and sexual intercourse. They also forbid their members to take any kind of an oath.

Then there are the Skaptsy who take the 19th chapter

of Mathew and the 12th verse as the foundation for their religion. It reads thus, "For there are some eunuchs who were born so from their mothers womb, and there are some eunuchs who were made eunuchs of men, and there are some eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heavens sake." They gatherin large groups and have wild dances which work them to a frenzy. At such times the operations takes place which mutilates the man and women for life. While it is a secret organization, one soon is able to tell who belongs to it because of the facial characteristics and the flabbiness of the flesh on the men. In spite of all the subpression which they are subjected to, they still seem to flourish, not only as a religious organization but well financially. They patronize each other and thus prosper materially.

One could go on naming many different kinds of sects which are just as strange as those cited. These sects have lived on in Russia under the most sever persecution. If the religious instinct will make men do such things, and carry on under worse conditions than they have in Russian today why should we worry so much about the future religion of that country. The gospel of Jesus Christ still has its drawing power and it will supplant all these religions if if is given a chance. Hecker says, "The evangelical movement in Russia is growing so rapidly that it is becoming part of the religious life of the country."[1]

But while the religious people are making rapid strides in their direction the Atheist movement is still active and

1 Hecker-- The Soviets and Religion pg 151

the government gives them all the support which it possibly can. Anti-religious speakers entering a community have found ready listeners. When they had left, the community would be safely atheistic and the priest would be driven from the community. But sooner or later a Baptist or Molokan missionary would turn up with the true gospel, and within a few months the church would again be opened and the community which was safely atheized would again begin to sing the Christian hymns in the Slavic versions.

So effectively has been the programs carried on by these churches that the Orthodox Church came together in a conference in 1923 to discuss methods by which they could combat this prosolyting of its members. The church formed a department known as the Home Missionary department which has for its special task the studying of the methods used by the Evangelical faiths. They in turn will inaugerate the same kind of a program or take some definite steps to stop the prosolyting. It has brought about a marked change in the character of the church. We see them using slogans of a political and social nature to attract the people to their services. This form of advertising was denied them at the beginning of the new government, but today is used quite widely.

At first the various Protestant Faiths which went into Russia were subsidized from foreign countries. Today the churches are strong enough to carry on their work themselves. The Baptist already claim over two million adherents, and

such popular religions as the Seven Day Adventist and Pentecostals are no lacking in having many followers.

With the coming of these new sects, has come a wide spread use of the Bible. While most of the people never saw a Bible yet the Greek Church was never apposed to them using the Book as the Roman Catholic Church has. The Russian were encouraged to read it, especially certain parts of the New Testament.

Attitude of the Government.

In spite of all the legislation which the government has put down in regards to religion, it must be kept in mind that in many places the laws could not and are not inforced evn to this day. The sentiment of the people are entirely apposed to the government, and then they go about the slower and more surer method of education. The policy of the officials is to pick out the weak parts in religion, and the religious books and exaggerate them. Articles on comparitive religions are written, with the express purpose to show there is some good in each one. All these faults the average theological student receives in his seminary course, so instead of harming the people it is only preparing the ground for those who would be the teachers in the future. It will have just the opposite effect upon the religious life of the people.

There is a second reason why the government is more liberal to the new sects which are at the present time making such wide appeals. Most of the leaders of these

faiths suffered with the leaders of the government under the Tsar regime. They were persecuted, exiled, and put into prison as were the communist. So they became common suffers in a common cause. Now they are working for the country so that all will be able to live happily.

But then there are some churches which are organized upon a communistic basis. The government works in harmony with these, not because they feel they can do them good, but because they feel they can do them some harm. In the first place the government wants to demonstrate to the people that a church can be run like the communistic government. If these churches succeed, then the government can bring more pressure to baar upon the autocratice Greek Church. In the second place it gives them an opportunity to enter into these local churches and spread their scientific knowledge. This is the best way to dis-intergrate the church in Russia they think. So they work with the people only with the idea of undoing them. It might be possible and it might fail.

The central problem of Russia, no, of the world today for Russia is only a small picture of what is happening or is going to happen in every country in the world, and that is,"can the Old Time Religion continue to work in this machine age. Some say that it is possible, others are trying to adjust themselves to the changing situation. But when you remember a child in grammar school knows more science than our grandparents, naturally that teaching is going to be in di-

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rectopposition to the archaic teachings of the sectarian theologians. The Evangelists have so far ignored the question entirely. No one has come forth to harmonize the two ideas in Russia. They still are teaching the "Simon Pure Religion," but with the growth of education they will have to work out some interpretation of religion which will benefit the while country. They are in the same condition as the Fundamentalist are in, in the United States. And who in the United States does not feel that they will eventually change their program to suit the needs of the people.

PROBABLE TRENDS OF THE FUTURE RELIGION.

We have traced the religious life of the Russians in great detail. We have seen the church start out as a messenger of good news, only to fall upon evil days. After centuries of oppression to the rule of the Tsar, we find it again free to go about its way, but now it has forgotten how to walk. Now the question arises whether this church can find a religious message in a materialistic world. Sherwood Eddy and Dr. Spinka are of the opinion that the church will again find itself, and come out of the struggle richer than it ever was before in its life. In a recent article in the Christian Century, Dr. Neihbur says, that 400 of the 1600 churches are closed in the City of Moscow. But he adds those which are open are filled to capacity on Sunday. Some of

the services last as long as five hours. When some one ask Dr. Spinka whether religion can be killed, he replied, "The genuine religion cannot be destroyed, it may evolve into a form vastly different from that which it was traditionally and historically possessed by it can never perish. Humanity cnanot live without de otion to ideals."[1] So what we look forward to inany country which tries to kill religion is for the church to modify its program to the uplifting of the masses of people and not living for itself.

Communism as a Religion.

Communism at the present time has all the ear marks of a religion. It has its prophets, its faith, it has a message which draws its large crowds, it has the missionary spirit, and it has the enthusiasm which characterizes all young and vital organizations.

Up to a few years ago one could go into Red Square Moscow betwen five and seven oclock and see large lines of people waiting to pass thru the mausoleum to see their beloved saint and prophet. Standing at the foot of the glass inclosure are two soldiers with fixed bayonets. Inside reclining upon a couch is a fair looking lawyer with a red flag draped across his breast. He has a tired look upon his face for the cares of the nation have seemed to weigh heavily upon him. For more than eight years he has lain there and every day there was a line of people waiting to see him.

In their generation this body may be dust- but no one who has spent some time in todays Russia can believe that

Wladimir Lljitch will have ceased to exist as a legend. Faith is more than a word. He has given his name to a messianic missionary movement. In Russia one speaks less and less of Communism and more and more of Leninism.

The first figure on sees in the railroad station is this squat little man who points his finger at you and tells you to learn, learn, learn. He is teacher, and workman, teacher and carpenter- one is constantly struck with the way which consciously or unconsciously the figure of Lenin becomes idealized into a substitute for the Christ figure.

Communism originally an arid theory has become of history and economics very far from the dynamic of life has become a national faith, made living and powerful by all the emotional force which masses of people put into a Faith and that it must eventually be judged as such, for only thus can it be properly evaluated. As our democracy was a noble experiment when it began so is socialism in Russia. It has come to mean more than a political system, or a doctrine to those who are in Russia today. Leninism is a creed and the living faith to Marxism, it has imagination, emotion, mentality and life form of a specific people- it is a new formula for power a release of hitherto frustrated energy and co-ordinating forces. Its modern pharisees are the Russian intellectuals led by Trotsky. Leninism is a power impulse and a faith.

Its faith is most observed--- In front of the tomb of Lenin stands large lines of people wating their turn to see this man. In the dead of winter Walter Durant sees this

peasant girl waiting to see ths man and he asks her, "Why are you standing here in the cold to see Lenin?" And then she replies: "Life is hard, but some how when I come here I feel that I get new strength." It reminds one of the strength which was imparted to those who came in contact with Jesus. He too lifted the burdens of those who suffered and sent them on their way stronger than when they met him.

What keeps Leninism warm and living is of course the omnipresence of the figure Lenin himself. Leninism is a personal religion. He is the vicarious suffered, the one who takes upon himself the sins of the weaker and working man. He saved others, but himself he could not save. He was wounded for our transgressions and with his stripes we are healed. The stone which was rejected shall become the corner stone of the temple. He died that we might obtain life. All these things which are found in Christianity are found in the Russian literature, drama and fiction of today. And it is Lenin who does all. It means the application of these virtues, sacrifice, humility, obedience to the building up of a Soviet State which is the cradle of the world.

Russia has caught the spirit of Lenin, and thought he is dead yet he lives. You see the officials sacrifice all they have for their cause. They live in the most miserable quarters, they accept the mimimum wage, they eat the commonest food, and they work for the only cause they know--the industrialization of Russia. Nothing comes in the way of this ambition. Those who interfere will find themselves

exiled. It has become a country which has been caught with a religious spirit to accomplish that which it has set out to do.

If it has all the fire and enthusiasm of a religion, then it will only be a short time when we will find its prophets and missionaries in every country in the world. This is true even today. All countries are more or less interested in this new doctrine. Whether Communism secceeds in establishing it self will depend upon the social structure of that country. In those countries where it does obtain a foothold, the religion will have to modify its program to suit the needs of the masses of the people. In the end it is the lowly, downtrodded, and out cast with whom every religion must deal. Let us now turn to see what countries which would be most susceptable to this new doctrine of Communism.

Countries Mostlikely Effected by Communism.

Let us now trun to its world wide program. It is right to say some countries are in the right condition for Communism to flourish while others will not "go Communistic" for some time to come. What conditions did we find in Russia that made for the revolt of the People? In the first place you will agree with me when I say there were only two classes of peoples in that country-- the extreme rich and the extreme poor. The middle class had been wiped out completely. In the second place justice was never meted out to the peasant.

He was always wrong and the bourgeoisie were always right. In the third place freedom, as we know it, here in this country, was never heard of in Russia. The press was censured, secret organizations were broken up, and church services except the Orthodox Church were suppressed. The Russian government was trying to carry on in the twentieth century as some medieval baron would rule. Now let all these conditions arise in a country and then have the State Church help the government carry out its program and when the people revolt and the government falls the church will fall too.

There is one country which stands out today which has all the conditions necessary for communism and that is China. One sees the masses illiterate, their religion bound up in superstitions, and unequal distribution of wealth, and at the same time he sees the country fighting to go ahead. Industrialization will do it, and the Russian government is losing no time in helping them out in there program. Up to a recent date the Soviet Govennment had a School for the Chinese Communist where they were trained in the way of this new form of government with the intent purpose to go back to their own country and spread its propoganda. It is a critical time for the missionaries in China. Whether they win or whether the gospel of Karl Marx wins will depend upon the Missionaries application of the social gospel of Jesus.

The second country where you are most likely to see communism succeed is Japan. Again you see the unequal distribution of material things of life, but you see the

the people are also progressive. The country has the western machine, but it is being used for the benefit of the few rich people. They also have Kagawa who understands the gospel of Jesus better than many westerners. He too is bidding for the masses and he has great followings in the industrial centers of the large cities. He has set his goal for two million christians for 1935; then he believes he will be able to have a telling influence upon the life of the whole nation. All religions will have to make their contributions in Japan if that country is to remain democratic as it is today.

The American Church.

We could take each country in the world and apply the same test to them, and tell whether they will be susceptable to Leninism or not. But what about the American church at the present time. What chances has communism to succeed in this country? It has been pointed out that America will be the last country to fall to this gospel and it might be true, but eventually we will accept many of their teachings or will fall as did the Russian Church. At the present time we have three distinct classes in America. We have those who are very rich and who have all the material things of life. We have the second class commonly known as the Middle Class who are living just above the starvation line. When their work gives out and they do not find another place in a few months they become charity charges. There is the third group who never have enough to eat and who are always depending upon some outside help to keep

both body and soul together. At the present time there are about eight million men out of work in America, and there does not seem to be any let up. Now when the middle class vanishes entirely, and the country has only two classes left, then you will begin to see trouble in America. The middle class is fast losing its place and they are taking their place with the peasant. How long it will last, and when they will be able to take their places where they were a short time ago depends upon those who have the money and who are running the country.

This thing we know, the country at the present time has an over supply of wheat and food stuffs, and at the same time in every large city one goes he can see the bread lines. Why? Is it poor distribution; is it the middle man who make exhorbitant profits; is it the high tarrifs which the capitalist has inaugerated or is it the lack of confidence which the capi alist has for those countries to whom he has lent money. Anyway we know people are starving in this land of the brave and the home of the free when they have no right to do it. And at the same time the masses are becoming m re discontented all the time.

The organization which ought to help those in need has to the present time been content to sit quiet and say nothing. Mayhe it is because they have no message which will draw the masses. There is one branch of our Protestant faith which to the present time believes it has the solution. But I think they too are feeling their message is a little

antique. The Salvation Army and the Goddwill Industries plus the missions are still talking about men being saved and lost, and those to whom they are talking do not care whether they are saved or lost. What the people want to whom they are talking is work, food, justice, and mercy and they never find it in the churches.

The Army has thrived since the war. Because they went across the water and gave away a few dougnuts and some coffee which was given to them; they have been able since that time to live upon their reputation. People have only been too glad to give them all the old junk which has been laying around their homes, and in return the Army sells it at a nominal cost , as they say. In reality they are making thousands of dollars on things which were GIVEN to them. The Goddwill Industries have not been so fortunate. They did not get into the war, to give away coffee andsinkers. So the Methodist Church not to be out done by the Salvation Army opened up a similar concern so they too can serve the people. But they have not been so successful as the Army . And they cannot boast of such large plants, to save the souls as the former organization can.

But what about the American Protestant Churches. They too do something for the people of the world, but not the people of their own land. We will send out millions of dollars to the Orient to convert the heathen but those on this side are forgotten. They (the churches) call for more money for Missions, and fail to see the bread lines in their

country. They will give four and six millions of dollars to build beautiful cathedrals and forget the girl of twelve who is working in the cottonmill in South Carolinaa to produce the money for that temple. The churches have been content to preach the virtues about God but have been unwilling to carry any of them into practice. Recently when the Rabbies of New York and Norman Thomas of the Socialist party were willing to call for a Clean Government in New York city, they found Harry Emerson Foddick unwilling to lend his aid. Why? Because he was afraid his source of living would be impaired, or because he would hurt some one in his church or maybe because he hasnt time.

The church has always lagged behind the social reforms. After Warren Billings hasbeen in jail for fifteen years we see them making a feeble appeal to the people of the country to use their influence to free this innocent man. After two or three men have been killed in a cotton mill strike you will find the churches sending investigating committees into that area to find out what the real trouble was. So they have split on the prohibition question, and even the slavery issue and every moral reform which has every been undertaken in this country. We have no leaders to show us the way. India has its Gandhi, Japan has its Kagawa, the Catholic Church has its Pope and the Protestant Church has ---------- no one.

There are certain changes which will have to take plac e in out American Church or it will eventually fall as did the

Russian Church when the Revolution came in that country. The emphasis of our message must be changed as the message of the Russian church was changed. Humanity must be put at the center of our gospel and not being saved or lost. Those things which will work for the benefit of the masses are the things which are ordained of God, and those things which will degrade the masses are the things which are of the devil. This is the change which must come in our religious life today. Whether the American Church is able to make the change remains to be seen, but this one thing is evident, the social life of the people will change to benefit the masses instead of the few, and when that time comes if the church has not made the change itself, then the change will be made with force from the outside as it did in Russia. The American Church like the Russian Church must begin to serve humanity first and itself second, and then it will find their buildings crowded. At the present time the Protestant churches have been wanting to be served. They have been moving away from the places where they are needed most and moving into the places where the better class of people are moving.

Whether the American church can see the hand writing upon the wall as portrayed in Russia remains to be seeen. It will first have to produce leaders who will be able to lead the people, So far these have been lacking in coming forth. But it is hoped that with our Social Ethics Deaprtments in our Theological Schools, and our freedom of speech

that they will be forthcoming. If they are, then the Americn American Church will not have to go thru the same ordeal as the Russian Church. Then religion in America will be safe and will have a lasting influence upon the life of the country. Religion and the Church will not have fallen on evil days for it will have learnt how to serve instead of being served as it is wont to be at the presnt time.

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